

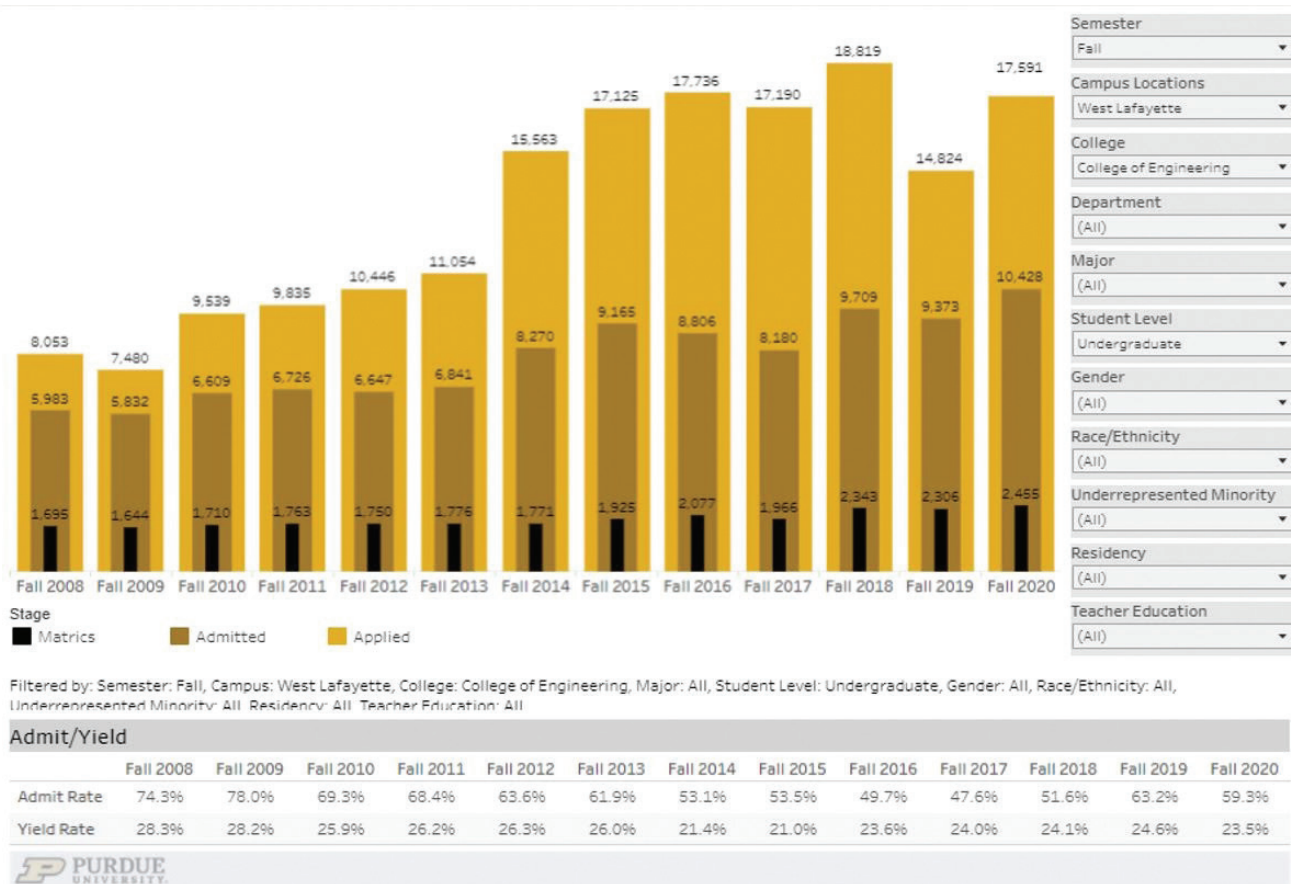
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Projected Versus Actual On-Campus Student Enrollment during the COVID-19 Pandemic for Fall 2020 at Purdue University: A Quantitative Analysis of Purdue Office of Enrollment Management Data

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Predicting student enrollment continues to interest higher education institutions. To respond to the challenges of increasing enrollment and demand for higher education, universities need proper and efficient models for enrollment projection. At Purdue University in West Lafayette, the Purdue Office of Enrollment Management provides services detailing yield rates and selectivity for enrollment, including the number of incoming students to specific college programs and students taking distance learning remotely. The fall 2020 academic school

year was analyzed for incoming freshman students in the College of Engineering. Using institutional data on the Purdue University IDATA website, the incoming freshman class size for fall 2020 was 8,869 students at Purdue West Lafayette and 2,455 in the College of Engineering, with 373 online and 2,082 residential. “Online” refers to students in the official online cohort; they pay a reduced tuition and may only take a subset of the total courses offered. The Office of Enrollment Management noted that this was created for the 2020 pandemic. It was hypothesized that with COVID-19 and students choosing to stay at home for the fall 2020 semester rather than attend campus in person, this could have had a significant impact on the student population size and therefore the enrollment projections process on the Office of Enrollment Management. It was concluded that with the Office of Enrollment Management planning ahead of time during the summer of 2020, projected student population size was not drastically affected during the fall of 2020.



Purdue IDATA College of Engineering admit and yield graph, fall 2008 to fall 2020.

Research advisor David Nelson writes: “This research explores the notion of how Purdue’s commitment to in-person class sessions during the fall of 2020 mediated a potential decrease in student enrollment. Mr. Bebekoski uses enrollment management projections in combination with final enrollment data to examine the effect of COVID-19 on Purdue fall 2020 enrollment.”